



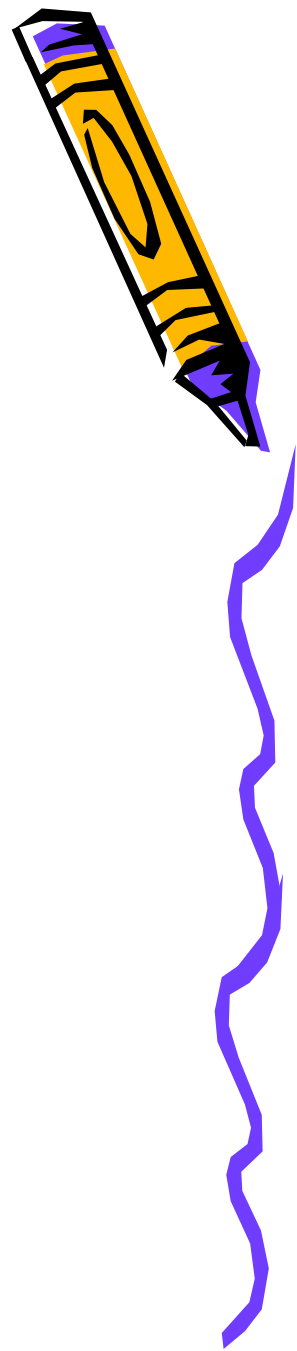
Chapter Twelve

Assisting Parents with Child Advocacy

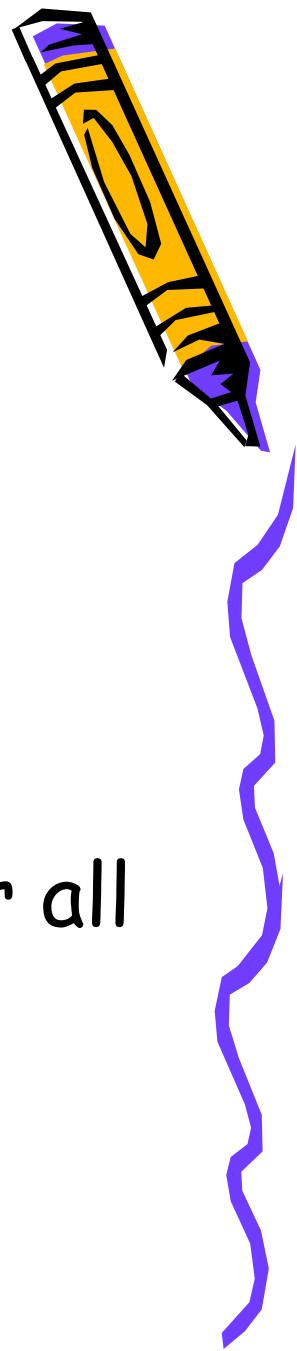
Dr. Kristen Pennycuff Trent

Chapter 12 Overview

- Child Advocacy
- The Child Advocate
- Preparing for Advocacy
- Advocacy for Children around the World



Child Advocacy

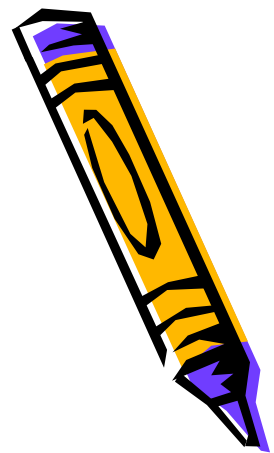


- Advocacy - the strong belief and active involvement for a cause.
- Numerous groups work to provide equal educational opportunities for all children regardless of ability, ethnicity, or gender

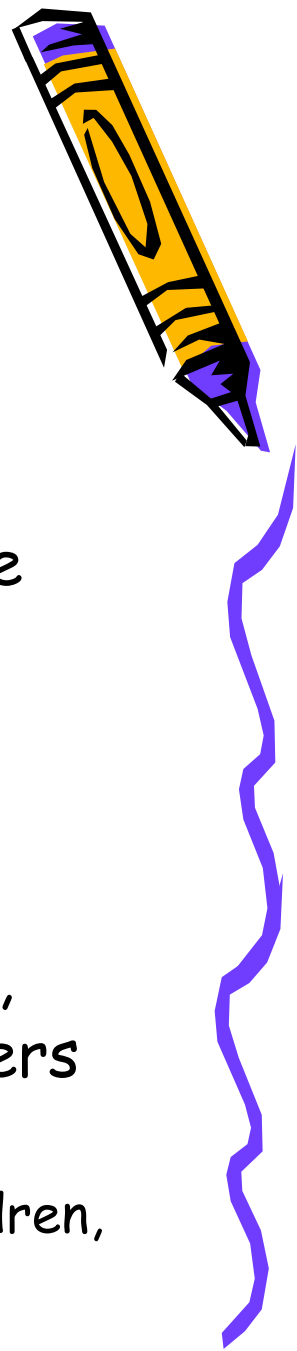


Child Advocacy

- Advocates work with:
 - Individual cases - for a specific child
 - Class actions - for whole groups
 - The Children's Defense Fund
- Most successful advocacy requires a broad-based approach, whether it is achieved through the responses of many individuals, advocacy work of professional organizations, or the lobbying efforts of political action committees.



The Child Advocate



- Types of Advocates
 - Leaders - people with vision who help keep advocacy efforts on track.
 - Advisers - people who share their expertise with advocates and policymakers.
 - Researchers - people who collect data and synthesize research reports to support advocacy efforts.
 - Contributors - people who make phone calls, stuff letters, and make visits or write letters to legislators.



(National Association for Education of Young Children, 2004)



The Child Advocate



The most common kind of advocacy
is what teachers and parents
do every day.



The Child Advocate



- Parents can:
 - Use funds of knowledge to provide a stimulating environment where children grow and play.
 - Spend time with children, listen to what concerns/interests them.
 - All children have the right to an education. Speak to teachers and administrators when that is not happening.
 - Develop a love for the environment by taking children to parks and other natural areas where they can play.
 - Look for resources for children who have special needs. Ask the teacher and/or social worker for help.
 - Report physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.
 - Attend meetings and speak out on issues.
 - Become active in your community.
 - Write and contact your legislator.



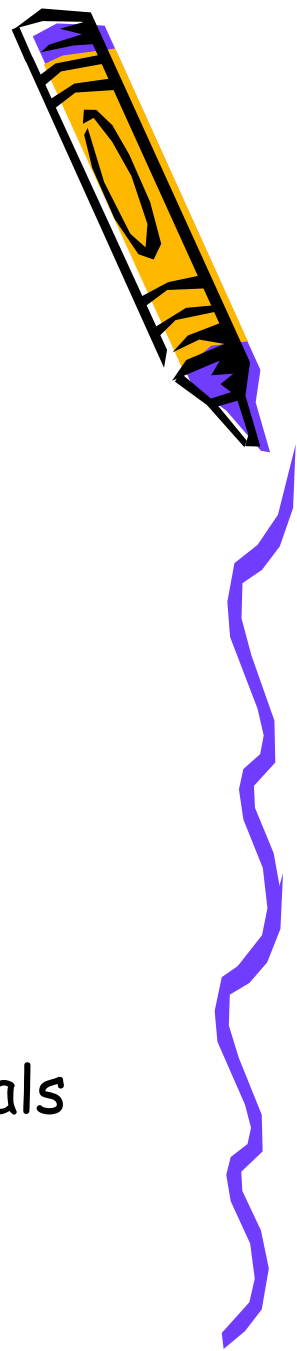
The Child Advocate



- Teachers can:
 - Acknowledge the family's funds of knowledge and how those help them with their development.
 - Provide a stimulating environment where children are free to speak and adults listen.
 - Maintain educational and social equity for culturally and linguistically diverse.
 - Seek out interesting excursions and activities that will benefit the child.
 - Determine the most appropriate education for a child with special needs.
 - Attend meetings and speak out on issues.
 - Become active in professional organizations.
 - Write and contact your legislator.



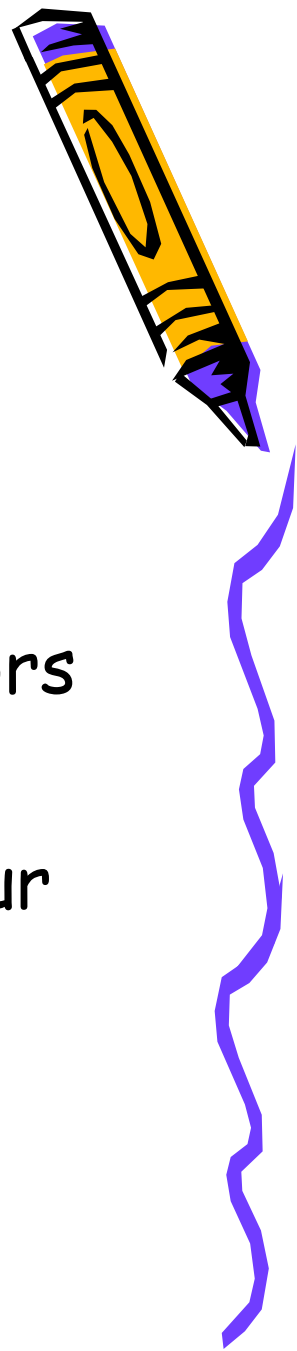
Preparing for Advocacy



- Procedures for individual cases:
 - Know your facts
 - Know the rights
 - Know the policy
 - Keep accurate notes
 - Discuss various options
 - Never go alone to a meeting with officials
 - Keep to the point when meeting with officials
 - Follow channels
 - Send a letter



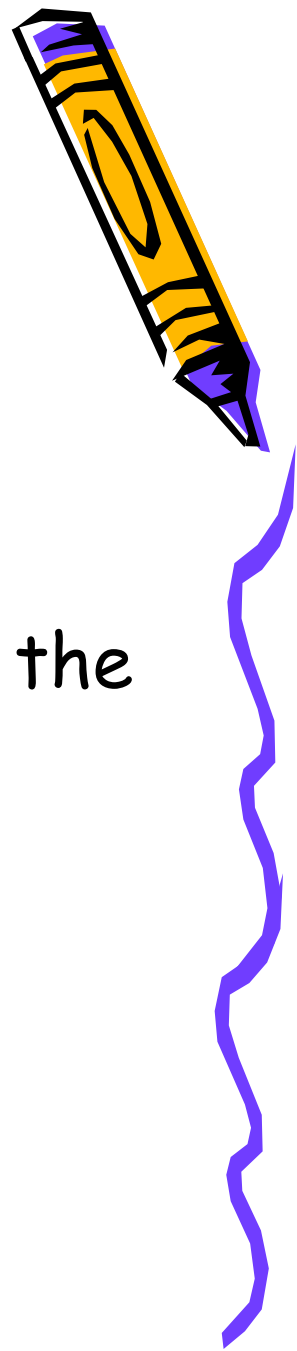
Preparing for Advocacy



- Steps for Public Advocacy:
 - Write to federal officials
 - Talk with and write to state legislators
 - Get involved before elections
 - Join professional organizations in your region
 - Get firsthand experience



Advocacy for Children around the World



- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - Many European nations have adopted the policy
 - Europe leading in advocacy for children
 - Ombudsman roles
 - US States are adopting the policy



Advocacy for Children Around the World



- Rights to education in Norway
 - the right of refugees to obtain education without regard to the length of their stay in the country or their legal status
 - the right to a religious and moral education
 - the right to come and go to school without extra costs
- Sweden - The Office of Children's Ombudsman
 - Works to guarantee rights and safety of children
- Austria - Federal Youth Welfare Act of 1989
 - Provincial and federal ombudsman



Advocacy for Children Around the World



- France
 - Created an independent agency vested with authority to defend and promote children's rights in 2000
- Latin America
 - no specific ombudsman for children, rights are advocated by broader ombudsman offices or similar commissions.
- Communication on the Rights of the Child
 - Department of Freedom, Security and Justice of the European commission distributed a draft outline of the rights all nations should follow for their children.



Your Turn: Choose One



- Go to the National Children's Advocacy Center website (www.nationalcac.org/professionals/model) and review their model programs. Discuss why these programs are effective when advocating for abused children and their families.
- Visit the website for Voices for America's Children (www.voices.org/issues). Select one issue this organization advocates for and discuss what this organization is doing to help children.

